

LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

REPORT:	EXECUTIVE MAYOR DECISION	
DATE OF DECISION	14th January 2026	
REPORT TITLE:	Growth Zone Programme and Project Budget FY 26/27 and 27/28	
CORPORATE DIRECTOR / DIRECTOR:	Venetia Reid-Baptiste, Interim Corporate Director – Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery Mark Baigent, Interim Director – Planning & Sustainable Regeneration	
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REPORT FOR: (Noting or Decision/Approval):	Decision / Approval	
KEY DECISION 2525CAB	Yes	<p>Key Decision – Decision incurs expenditure, or makes savings, of more than £1,000,000 or such smaller sum which the decision-taker considers is significant having regard to the Council's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates</p> <p style="text-align: right;">and</p> <p>Key Decision – Decision significantly impacts on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more Wards</p>
CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION?	NO	Public
WARDS AFFECTED:	Fairfield / Addiscombe West / Park Hill and Whitgift	

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1** This report sets out the proposed Growth Zone budget and project programme for 2026/27 and 2027/28, reflecting the continued need to regenerate and renew Croydon town centre as expressed in the Council's Town Centre Vision, Growth Plan and Local Plan Partial Review. The Growth Zone programme is a business rate retention mechanism, and the income is ring-fenced by the Statutory Instrument, providing additional funding to the Council and therefore positively contributing to its financial position. The Growth Zone budget and programme is defined alongside the key partners of the Greater London Authority (GLA) and Transport for London (TfL).
- 1.2** The proposed Growth Zone budget and programme for financial years 2026/27 and 2027/28 will contribute directly to the delivery of the Executive Mayor's Business Plan, specifically supporting Outcome 2 (*Croydon is a place of opportunity for business, earning and learning*) Priority 1 (*Support the regeneration of Croydon's town and district centres*) and Outcome 4 (*Croydon is a cleaner, safer and healthier place, a borough we're proud to call home*) Priority 1 (*Croydon is a cleaner, safer and healthier place*). The programme will deliver a coordinated set of projects focused on promoting town centre growth, driving regeneration, and supporting Croydon's social and economic recovery.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

For the reasons set out in the report, the Executive Mayor is recommended:

- 2.1** to agree an additional £9,526,090 budget for the continued delivery of the Growth Zone programme in 2026/27 and 2027/28;
- 2.2** to delegate to the Corporate Director of Sustainable Communities, Regeneration & Economic Recovery in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer (Section 151), the Executive Mayor and the Cabinet Member for Planning and Regeneration authority to make necessary future changes to the funding assigned to projects within the Growth Zone Delivery Programme;
- 2.3** to delegate to the Growth Zone Steering Group authority to make the necessary changes to the final distribution of funding and forecast annual spend profile for relevant projects, as noted in Table 1;
- 2.4** to note the indicative funding profile for Growth Zone Sub Groups and projects as detailed in Table 1 of this report.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1** This report sets the Growth Zone budget and project programme for 2026/27 and 2027/28, which is an annual requirement of Growth Zone governance.

- 3.2 The recommendation to approve the programme for 2026/27 and 2027/28 as set out in this report reflects the continued need to support the town centre’s growth, regeneration and social and economic recovery as defined in the Council’s Town Centre Vision, Growth Plan, Local Plan Partial Review and Mayor’s business plan.
- 3.3 The budget and programme reflect the Council’s current resource structures that reflect and respond to the Council’s financial challenges. It is important that the programme is realistic in terms of the capacity for delivery.
- 3.4 The Growth Zone programme is supported by core partners: Greater London Authority (GLA) and Transport for London (TfL). This partnership has been secured through the well-established and functional Growth Zone governance. As in previous years, to support this report the Executive Mayor and the GLA Deputy Mayor for Planning, Regeneration and the Fire Service, Jules Pipe CBE, met in December 2025 to discuss the proposed Growth Zone Budget and Programme for 2026/27 and 2027/28, at the Growth Zone Annual Board Meeting, during which the GLA expressed its support for the programme.
- 3.5 This report seeks the approval of the Executive Mayor for the Growth Zone budget and programme for 2026/27 and 2027/28 as set out in Table 1.

4. CONTRIBUTION TO EXECUTIVE MAYOR PERRY’S BUSINESS PLAN

Outcome 1: The Council balances its books, listens to residents and delivers good sustainable services.	Outcome 2: Croydon is a place of opportunity for business, earning and learning.	Outcome 3: Children and young people in Croydon have the chance to thrive, learn and fulfil their potential.	Outcome 4: Croydon is a cleaner, safer and healthier place, a borough we’re proud to call home.	Outcome 5: People can lead healthier and independent lives for longer.
	✓		✓	

5. BACKGROUND AND DETAILS

- 5.1 The Growth Zone business rate uplift retention funding mechanism was approved by Cabinet in July 2016 and the Mayor of London in October 2016, and ring-fences growth in business rates from April 2018 for 16 years. Following the adoption of the Croydon Opportunity Area Planning Framework by the Council and the Greater London Authority in 2013, it was clear the infrastructure needs related to the planned growth required additional financial support. Therefore, from inception, the Growth Zone was developed in a collaborative approach with the GLA and TfL to secure central government financial devolution in the form of business rate retention for a designated area within central Croydon.

- 5.2** The Growth Zone programme was originally established to leverage opportunities to create the appropriate social, economic, cultural and physical infrastructure needed to ensure that the significant development and growth anticipated within Croydon town centre was sustainable.
- 5.3** In addition to Growth Zone funding, the Council's Town Centre Regeneration Programme is funded by a range of other sources, including £18.5m from Levelling Up Fund (LUF), TfL's Local Implementation Programme, GLA Civic Partnership Programme, Whitgift ILTA remedy projects, grants, Council capital contributions, plus Community Infrastructure Levy and Section 106.
- 5.4** The January 2024 Cabinet report '*Croydon Town Centre Regeneration Programme and Growth Zone annual budget and programme - 2024/25*' set out the proposed annual Growth Zone budget and high-level programme for 2024/25. This represented a varied programme and demonstrated the flexibility of Growth Zone funding, under Growth Zone governance, to deliver interventions that are the appropriate response to the current circumstances and as circumstances evolve.
- 5.5** It was always envisaged the strategic direction of the Growth Zone and funding available would flex and change over time, with a governance structure established to ensure that the priorities of the programme reflect the needs of the town centre as development and regeneration takes shape.
- 5.6** In February 2025 Cabinet approved a new [Town Centre Vision and Target Operating Model](#). Under the guidance of the Executive Mayor, the Town Centre Regeneration Programme was realigned to support the Town Centre Vision and deliver immediate support to the Town Centre, setting the conditions for future growth and development.
- 5.7** The realigned programme was confirmed by two Executive Mayoral Decision Reports in May 2025.

Growth Zone - [Details of May 2025 Growth Zone Mayoral Decision](#) and accompanying [Decision Report](#). As well as confirming the realignment, the May 2025 paper set the Growth Zone programme for 2025/26. Therefore, the Growth Zone funding request for 2026/27 and 2027/28 captured in this report relates solely to the allocation of funds that have not been allocated previously.

Levelling Up Fund – [Details of May 2025 Levelling Up Fund Mayoral Decision](#) and accompanying [Decision Report](#)

- 5.8** Complementing the Town Centre Vision, the [Croydon Growth Plan](#) launched by the Executive Mayor in May 2025 sets out a bold strategy to drive regeneration, attract investment and deliver transformative developments across the borough.
- 5.9** The September 2025 Cabinet report, '*Growth and Regeneration Update*', highlighted the continued promotion of the Croydon Growth Plan and provided a progress update on the delivery of the Town Centre Regeneration Programme, including its Growth Zone-funded elements.

5.10 Growth Zone 25/26 Programme Update and 26/27 27/28 Programme and Budget

- 5.11** Table 1 below provides an update on projects that sit within the Growth Zone Programme for 2025/26, as approved under the *'Town Centre Vision: Realignment of the existing Growth Zone programme and funding'* Executive Mayor Report on 9th May 2025.
- 5.12** Table 1 also sets out the proposed Growth Zone Programme and Budget for 2026/27 and 2027/28.
- 5.13** This year's Growth Zone budget request covers a period of two years. This marks a shift from previous reports where funding was sought for the following financial year only. As a consequence of the Town Centre Vision, Croydon Growth Plan and progress with the Local Plan Partial Review it is possible to set the budget and programme for two years.
- 5.14** Extending the timeline will provide projects with greater stability and funding certainty compared to the previous one-year cycle. This change supports more streamlined delivery and enables a move towards an even more strategic approach to managing the Growth Zone funding pot.

Table 1 – Growth Zone 25/26 Programme update and 26/27 and 27/28 Programme and Budget

Project	Project summary	Current Position (25/26)		2YR Programme (26/27 and 27/28)	
		Funding & Spend Profile	Outputs & Status	Funding Request	Outputs
Minster Green	Located in the heart of Croydon's Old Town, Croydon Minster has been a focal point for the borough's wider history and is a key community partner for positive change in Croydon. This public realm project will re-establish the relevance of the Grade 1 listed Minster's surroundings, uplifting the public experience whilst celebrating the heritage building. The works will focus on an improved forecourt and pathways adjacent to the church, alongside architectural feature lighting to the Minster. These changes will improve the quality and perception of the heritage setting, greatly enhancing the Minster and its surrounds for the people of Croydon.	£2,500,000	<u>Outputs</u> Development of rescoped design; completion of a RIBA Stage 4 technical design; amendment to consents as required; construction commencement. <u>Status</u> Design / Delivery	No additional funding requested. <i>Previously approved funding:</i> FY 26/27 £1,500,000	Completion of Minster Green Public Realm
Urban Room	The Croydon Urban Room is a physical and digital platform for public, business and wider partner engagement and participation in the revival and development of the Whitgift Centre and the wider North End Quarter area of the town centre. Situated in an existing retail unit in the Whitgift Centre, the Croydon Urban Room is an accessible public space - an extension of the public realm that aims to catalyse the sustainable renewal, vitality and resilience of the area. It aims to do this by improving access and inclusion, building civic agency in the future regeneration, planning and development process and in turn contributing to expanding social, sustainable, creative and learning	£433,220	<u>Outputs</u> Operation of the physical Urban Room unit (notwithstanding the recent closure due to facilities management) and digital platforms; continued programme of workshops, activities, events and exhibitions; staff costs; ongoing security and unit / website maintenance. <u>Status</u>	FY 26/27 £470,000 FY 27/28 £643,500 TOTAL REQUEST £1,113,500	Operation of the physical Urban Room unit and digital platforms; continued programme of workshops, activities, events and exhibitions; staff costs; ongoing security and unit / website maintenance; rent, service charge and insurance (where required).

	infrastructure, bringing new investment and activities.		Delivery		
Construction Logistics	Continue projects to mitigate the impact of construction logistics on the operation of the Croydon town centre and wider area. Examples include: Croydon Considerate Constructor award scheme; utility and developer coordination and forum; mobile CCTV construction site activity monitoring; and CCTV monitoring of development sites.	£100,000	<u>Outputs</u> Continued CCTV Renewals; staffing to assist new Considerate Constructors award scheme and enforcement; St Georges Walk Licence permits; Annual data SIM renewals in town centre; One Network Module. <u>Status</u> Delivery	FY 26/27 £100,000 FY 27/28 £100,000 TOTAL REQUEST £200,000	Continue projects to mitigate the impact of construction logistics on the operation of the Croydon town centre. Continue CCTV Improvements, annual SIM card renewals and staffing costs.
Inward Investment	This project is the vehicle to deliver the three-year Croydon Investment Plan (2024). This Plan provides a collaborative, data-driven approach to bringing investment into the borough. This will enable the Council to foster long-term growth and financial success while enabling new economic and regeneration opportunities for the residents of Croydon. This work is supported further by the Town Centre Vision and Croydon Growth Plan.	£207,491	<u>Outputs</u> Creation of a Partnership Board; Creation of Investment Action Plan (2025 - 2028) w/ Partnership Board; First year delivery of the Investment Action Plan; Develop Croydon Based Campaign. <u>Status</u> Delivery	FY 26/27 £325,000 FY 27/28 £310,000 TOTAL REQUEST £635,000	Updating the Inward Investment concierge service, creating a casework approach to better understand the needs of investors and to create the right conditions for investment. Securing 40 new businesses within the Growth Zone each financial year. With a focus on the 8 sectors mentioned within the national industrial strategy. Creation of a Bi-Annual investment prospectus, showcasing Croydon's key investment opportunities, including sites and assets,

					<p>infrastructure, businesses and high growth sectors.</p> <p>Business Support for a minimum of 100 SME's each financial year supporting the creation of 50 new jobs each year.</p> <p>Deliver a Nighttime economy study and plan to support the centre improve as a thriving and inclusive destination.</p> <p>Staffing costs.</p>
Culture	Continued delivery of a cultural programme to embed and build on the positive impact and success of This Is Croydon, our year as London Borough of Culture (2023). The funding supports delivery of projects which drive footfall and attract diverse audiences into the town centre, support the local cultural and creative sector to develop their work and activate town centre venues and public realm and promote the town centre as a cultural destination.	£909,047	<p><u>Outputs</u> Delivery of annual calendar of cultural events and festivals; grants programme for local creative sector; seasonal marketing campaigns; Growth Zone cultural activation strategy and action plan; fundraising to leverage external investment; Samuel-Coleridge Taylor 150th anniversary special programme (supported by NLHF funding)</p> <p><u>Status</u> Delivery</p>	<p>FY 26/27 £1,450,000</p> <p>FY 27/28 £1,600,000</p> <p>TOTAL REQUEST £3,050,000</p>	<p>Main events programme, building on successful activations and partnerships developed following LBoC.</p> <p>Additional grant funding programme to support strategic partnerships (eg Croydonites festival) and strategic priorities (eg supporting music and nighttime economy through gigs grants).</p> <p>Cultural sector development will be delivered through commissions, co-curation with local creatives and collaboration and joint networking events with the independent Croydon culture sector bodies (Croydon Makers & Creators and Croydon Creative Enterprise Zone).</p>

<p>Museum of Croydon</p>	<p>Continued support of the Museum of Croydon as a visitor and cultural destination in 2023/24. Strong social infrastructure is critical to the Croydon Opportunity Area's regeneration, particularly as growth is directly linked to resident and visitor spend and footfall. The operation of the Museum of Croydon for the Borough of Culture has increased footfall.</p>	<p>£355,000</p>	<p><u>Outputs</u> Provision of an accessible culture and heritage attraction in the town centre; delivery of exhibitions programme e.g. <i>Forge: Industries of Croydon</i>; annual events programme for children and families; seasonal programme for adults; outreach programme delivered in community settings; sector support programme developing the skills and capacity of the cultural sector; schools engagement programme.</p> <p><u>Status</u> Delivery</p>	<p>FY 26/27 £402,500</p> <p>FY 27/28 £418,000</p> <p>TOTAL REQUEST £820,500</p>	<p>This funding will secure and support the growth of the Museum of Croydon as a cultural visitor attraction in the town centre with an extended public offer including:</p> <p>Longer opening hours across three galleries and the research room</p> <p>A dedicated learning offer to engage students, education providers and community groups into the town centre for tours and visits</p> <p>Two large exhibitions and four smaller exhibitions per annum including partnerships with national touring exhibitions and local creative partners and communities</p> <p>A seasonal programme of adult events including talks and workshops, working with local creative partners</p> <p>A year round programme of family activities and events in the Museum and wider town centre, supporting activation and engagement with the heritage trail</p> <p>Marketing and digital promotion to build awareness of the heritage of the town centre and develop its identity as a cultural destination</p>
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<p style="text-align: center;">Transport</p>	<p>Ongoing development of sustainable transport infrastructure to support the growth of Croydon town centre.</p>	<p>£50,000</p>	<p><u>Outputs</u> Strategic Transport Modelling to cover Croydon Purley Way and Town Centre; further studies to define required infrastructure.</p> <p><u>Status</u> Delivery</p>	<p>FY 26/27 £500,000</p> <p>FY 27/28 £500,000</p> <p>TOTAL REQUEST £1,000,000</p>	<p>Strategic Transport Modelling to further define the planned transport infrastructure to support the current and forecast growth of the town centre up to 2041.</p> <p>Public Transport Improvements, focussed on the construction of the West Croydon Station Car Park improvement project, incorporating enhanced taxi, drop-off, and cycle parking facilities. In addition, technical studies and design work will progress on an emerging list of projects across the town centre, scheduled for delivery in future years.</p> <p>Highways Mitigation Improvements, including technical studies and design work focussed on detailed junction analysis and the development of tailored mitigation packages. These proposals will enable the growth identified in the Local Plan by unlocking capacity and improving network performance. The proposed interventions will support tram, bus, cycle, and walking networks, while ensuring the safe and efficient movement of goods and services. Outcomes will include a clear set of deliverable schemes, ready for design and implementation in future years.</p>
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Wellesley Rd	New surface level crossing at Wellesley Rd to replace subway crossing, improving accessibility and reducing the severance caused by the Wellesley Road. The quality of the public realm will also be improved, changing the character of this movement corridor to help knit the public realm back together.	£1,000,000	<u>Outputs</u> Delivery of Wellesley Road Crossing project. <u>Status</u> Delivery	No additional funding requested.	N/A
Town Centre Regeneration Strategy	The Croydon Town Centre Regeneration Strategy, commissioned in partnership with the GLA and TfL, will support the Council's approach to recovery and renewal of Croydon Town Centre. As an amplification of the revised Local Plan (submitted 2024), Town Centre Vision - Croydon is ready (2025), and recently launched Growth Plan (2025) - the strategy will support Croydon to be 'the place where creativity, opportunity and growth happens', and deliver 'a vibrant, attractive and flourishing town centre that celebrates the past, and draws in residents of the future.'	£20,000	<u>Outputs</u> Conclusion of the Town Centre Regeneration Strategy. <u>Status</u> Delivery	No additional funding requested.	N/A
East Croydon Link Bridge	Through working in partnership with Network Rail and Menta Regeneration, this project seeks to ensure that the unpaid side of the East Croydon Link Bridge is complete and able to operate as a public crossing between the east and west sides of the train tracks. This will support the regeneration of the East Croydon area in line with the East Croydon Masterplan, Croydon Growth Plan and Town Centre Vision.	£422,000	<u>Outputs</u> Resolution of costs & legal terms; legal agreements signed for capital works and future maintenance; Planning consents obtained; commencement of capital works delivery. <u>Status</u> Delivery	FY 26/27 £35,000 FY 27/28 £36,800 TOTAL REQUEST £71,800 <i>Previously approved funding:</i> FY 26/27 £279,000	Completion of the capital works and opening of the works to the public. LBC annual contribution towards soft maintenance of unpaid side of the bridge.

<p>Urban Greening</p>	<p>Development of a resilient implementation strategy (including early delivery at Wellesey Road and George Street reserves and greening outside East Croydon station) of multi-staged green infrastructure and environmental improvements, including wind mitigation, biodiversity improvements, nature-based SuDS, air quality improvements and health & wellbeing enhancements.</p>	<p>£10,990</p>	<p><u>Outputs</u> Completion of Town Centre Treescape Assessment</p> <p><u>Status</u> Project rescoped alongside TC Vision</p>	<p>No additional funding requested.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>College Green Public Realm</p>	<p>The redesign of College Green will establish a high quality enjoyable and accessible, civic square of at the heart of the Fairfield Masterplan area and emerging Cultural Quarter. The redesign of College Green will be preceded by structural improvements to the College Green podium. It will provide an inclusive setting for the iconic Fairfield Halls, locally listed Croydon College and emerging residential communities in the area; and help celebrate the important heritage of the area. It will include a network of strategic step free links and allow ease of movement and improved permeability; helping knit together the wider network of public spaces in the Town Centre including Queens Gardens and Surrey Street beyond. An improved Park Lane frontage and forecourt for the Fairfield Halls will help welcome visitors, and these changes together will reactivate the civic space and improve public perception of the Town Centre.</p>	<p>£560,611</p>	<p><u>Outputs</u> Design development of re-scoped scheme (public realm and podium), including planning requirements; Completion of a revised RIBA stage 4 technical design and cost plan to support procurement; Planning review to ensure compliance and associated requirements; Partner and public engagement; Commence tender for Delivery Contractor</p> <p><u>Status</u> Design</p>	<p>No additional funding requested.</p> <p><i>Previously approved funding:</i></p> <p>FY 26/27 £2,197,815</p> <p>FY 27/28 £2,381,574</p>	<p>Appointment of Delivery Contractor.</p> <p>Delivery of College Green Public Realm.</p>

<p>Amplifying Surrey Street</p>	<p>Amplifying Surrey Street is a project funded as part of The Civic Partnership Programme, the Mayor of London's new regeneration grant funding programme running from 2024 to 2027. Croydon Council co-developed a strategy with community partners identifying the importance of the spatial fringes of the North End Quarter in providing an active and safe environment, supporting the success of the wider town centre environment. Surrey Street and its surroundings were emphasised as an area of civic, cultural and historical importance. The Amplifying Surrey Street project celebrates diverse communities and activities, past and present, by supporting creative expansion and rejuvenation of the public realm, prioritising improvements for public safety, driving good growth through a sustainable future of the market with traders, and testing innovative economic partnership models to activate vacant sites.</p>	<p>£ 624,093</p>	<p><u>Outputs</u> Grant Funding agreement legal approval; Mobilisation of project; Completion of pre-commencement baseline evaluation stage with GLA; Delivery of early intervention projects; Project brief development definition stage; Engagement Strategy; Recruitment into posts</p> <p><u>Status</u> Design</p>	<p>No additional funding requested.</p> <p><i>Previously approved funding:</i></p> <p>FY 26/27 £1,118,809</p> <p>FY 27/28 £1,262,565</p>	<p>26/27 Completion of site-based works related to Project 1 - Identity & Heritage, including wayfinding.</p> <p>26/27 Completion of Project 3 - Market infrastructure and greening improvement works.</p> <p>26/27 Launch of a one-year programme of events on Surrey Street.</p> <p>Ongoing engagement</p> <p>GLA reporting requirements</p> <p>27/28 Completion of Cultural Reactivation of Vacant Units</p> <p>Project evaluation.</p> <p>AMP completion October 2027</p>
<p>The Queen's Gardens</p>	<p>Improvement works to the Queen's Gardens incomplete north-west corner to support the regeneration of the Mid Croydon area.</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p><u>Outputs</u> N/A</p> <p><u>Status</u> Initiation</p>	<p>FY 26/27 £520,000</p> <p>FY 27/28 £N/A</p> <p>TOTAL REQUEST £520,000</p>	<p>Design development of scheme</p> <p>Completion of Planning process</p> <p>Technical design and cost plan</p> <p>Procurement</p> <p>On-site delivery</p> <p>Completion of Queen's Gardens Steps</p>

High Street Data Service	The High Street Data Service (HSDS) is a collaborative data sharing partnership between the Mayor of London, London boroughs, and Business Improvement Districts. The HSDS is collection of private and public data, for example: high street footfall, spending, air quality, land ownership.	£20,000	<u>Outputs</u> Continued annual membership fee for GLA High Street Data Service for Croydon Town Centre, to support Growth Zone programme. <u>Status</u> Delivery	FY 26/27 £20,000 FY 27/28 £20,000 TOTAL REQUEST £40,000	Continued annual membership fee for GLA High Street Data Service for Croydon Town Centre, to support Growth Zone programme.
Maintenance	Ongoing maintenance of completed projects in the Growth Zone.	£100,000	<u>Outputs</u> Ongoing maintenance of completed projects in the Growth Zone. <u>Status</u> Delivery	FY 26/27 £220,000 FY 27/28 £315,000 TOTAL REQUEST £535,000	Ongoing maintenance of completed projects in the Growth Zone, including: Minster Green, College Green, Amplifying Surrey Street.
Growth Zone Salaries	Projected staffing costs for Growth Zone Regeneration Team.	£606,850	<u>Outputs</u> Projected staffing costs for Growth Zone Regeneration Team. <u>Status</u> Delivery	FY 26/27 £751,361 FY 27/28 £788,929 TOTAL REQUEST £1,540,290	Projected staffing costs for Growth Zone Regeneration Team.

<p>Comms. Commission</p>	<p>Appointment of London Communications Agency to create and deliver a comprehensive place brand, marketing, and communications strategy for Croydon. The purpose of the commission is to unify growth and regeneration efforts under a single narrative that celebrates the borough's regeneration programme, inward investment opportunity, heritage, cultural diversity, and economic strengths, while addressing negative perceptions. Working with partners and informed by local insights, the commission will develop a brand activation plan and sustained marketing campaign to position Croydon as a safe, attractive destination for residents, visitors, businesses, and investors. Acting as brand stewards, the agency will ensure consistent messaging across all channels, supporting the borough's transformation and inward investment ambitions in line with the Growth Plan.</p>	<p>£50,000</p>	<p><u>Outputs</u> Tender exercise completed; appointment of agency and contract commencement</p> <p><u>Status</u> Delivery</p>	<p>No additional funding requested.</p> <p><i>Previously approved funding:</i></p> <p>FY 26/27 £100,000</p> <p>FY 27/28 £50,000</p>	<p>Contract completion</p>
<p>Programme Management</p>	<p>Appointment of programme management support to facilitate the successful delivery of the Town Centre Regeneration Project programme. Support the transition to permanent recruitment to provide internal programme management support.</p>	<p>£370,000</p>	<p><u>Outputs</u> Programme management support for Town Centre Regeneration Project programme</p> <p><u>Status</u> Delivery</p>	<p>No additional funding requested.</p> <p><i>Previously approved funding:</i></p> <p>FY 26/27 £177,800</p> <p>FY 27/28 £52,000</p>	<p>Programme management support for the Town Centre Regeneration Project programme</p>
<p>Town Centre Hoarding</p>	<p>Project to develop and implement a coordinated approach for branded hoarding across upcoming Town Centre Regeneration Projects,</p>	<p>£40,000</p>	<p><u>Outputs</u> Design development; installation of Minster Green hoarding</p>	<p>No additional funding requested.</p>	<p>Installation of College Green and Amplifying Surrey Street Hoarding</p>

	to promote and celebrate the forthcoming delivery of Town Centre Regeneration Projects.		<u>Status</u> Design	<i>Previously approved funding:</i> FY 26/27 £60,000	
Town Centre Programme	Allocation to be held in reserve for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unexpected cost pressures arising as projects enter delivery stage - Opportunities to maximise impact through additional delivery or enhancements to project scopes or specifications. 	N/A	<u>Outputs</u> N/A <u>Status</u> N/A	<i>Previously approved funding:</i> FY 26/27 £2,360,000	N/A

6. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.15** Three other reasonable alternative options were considered and were rejected for the reasons set out below.
- 5.16** An option would be to not set a budget and programme from 2026/27 and allow the Growth Zone income to appreciate given the Council's financial and capacity constraints. This option was rejected as it would not support the town centre's growth, regeneration and social and economic recovery at a very critical stage given the impact of the pandemic and the challenging macro-economic conditions. Also, Growth Zone income is ring fenced given the statutory instrument, so is a source of funding for interventions and projects that is not available from other sources given the Council's and partners' financial challenges. Finally, the GLA and TfL would be unlikely to support this option as it creates a clear tension with the original intent and approval of the Growth Zone in 2016.
- 5.17** A second option would have been to set a budget and programme that is overly ambitious with the very real risk of under delivery. To ignore the Council's current resource and structures as of 2025/26 that reflect the Council's financial challenges would represent poor programme management.
- 5.18** A third option would be to continue setting the Growth Zone programme and budget on an annual basis, as has been done in recent years. However, this approach has been discounted because a one-year cycle does not provide sufficient strategic oversight of the Growth Zone funding pot given the publication of the Town Centre Vision, Croydon Growth Plan and Local Plan Partial Review.

6. CONSULTATION

- 6.1** Consultation has taken place with key partners as established through the Growth Zone governance structures. The budget and programme set out in this report is supported by the core governance partners of Greater London Authority (GLA) and Transport for London (TfL), having received the necessary approvals from the Growth Zone Steering Group in November and December 2025.
- 6.2** This joint working is also demonstrated by the annual meeting of the Executive Mayor with the GLA Deputy Mayor for Planning, Regeneration and the Fire Service - Jules Pipe CBE- held in December 2025. The meeting focussed on the proposed Growth Zone Programme Update and Budget for 2026/27 and 2027/28, during which the GLA confirmed its support for the programme.

7. IMPLICATIONS

7.1 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1.1** At the start of 2025/26, the Growth Zone dedicated reserve balance was £26.69m.

- 7.1.2** The May 2025 Executive Mayor Decision Report '*Town Centre Vision: Realignment of the existing Growth Zone programme and funding*' agreed the continued funding of Growth Zone projects and activity outlined in the Growth Zone January 2024 Cabinet Report to cover the 2025/26 financial year. This was made possible by reallocating unspent funding previously approved at Cabinet in January 2024 to deliver the Growth Zone Programme.
- 7.1.3** In addition, the May 2025 Mayoral Report agreed a £5m allocation to the College Green Public Realm scheme from the Growth Zone Programme Earmark Reserves.
- 7.1.4** It is forecast that spend in 2025/26 will be circa £8.38m.
- 7.1.5** The table shown in 8.1.10 sets out the 2025/26 opening balance and the forecast spend of £8.38m for 2025/26, applying an estimated income of £3.65m (based on current income levels and assuming no major changes). This is forecast to lead to a closing balance of £21.96m at the end of 2025/26.
- 7.1.6** The effect of this report is to agree a budget of £9.53m Growth Zone funding for financial years 2026/27 and 2027/28. This budget is in addition to the Growth Zone funding approved in the May 2025 Mayoral Decision Report, as set out in Table 1.
- 7.1.7** The estimated income levels for financial years 2026/27 and 2027/28 shown in 8.1.10 are based on current income levels plus the assumed addition of the new Home Office building to the Non-Domestic Rating List in 2026.
- 7.1.8** This two-year funding allocation will be incorporated into the Council's budget for the next financial year as part of its standard budget-setting process. Growth Zone funding is ring-fenced and separate from the Council's general fund. It does not increase borrowing, as it is drawn from existing reserves.
- 7.1.9** Growth Zone budget risk is managed as follows.
- The Growth Zone financial model is based on anticipated future business rates income, which would enable the Council to fund Growth Zone programmes and projects. Any significant changes to future income streams will impact on the viability of the Growth Zone.
 - Growth Zone income levels depend on the satisfactory progress of developments occurring in the town centre, which will bring about the uplift in business rates. If these developments slip, the income in future years could be affected.
 - Any overspends in early programmes will impact on the funding available for later projects and programmes. Expenditure and delivery of projects will be managed by the Growth Zone Steering Group. Any unavoidable overspend will mean a reduction in funding available for projects planned for the future.
 - Project and programme delays could impact on the success of the Growth Zone. Governance arrangements are in place with partners to ensure clear understanding of roles and responsibilities. Regular cross partner meetings of the Growth Zone Steering

Group is a practical method of monitoring project management and the early identification of any delivery issues for attention.

- Staff resourcing requirements, including the recruitment and retention of staff could impact the proposed programme of works under the Growth Zone.

7.1.10 Revenue and Capital consequences of report recommendation

	Current Year	Medium Term Financial Strategy – 3 year forecast		
	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	2028/29
GZ Reserve available	26,692	21,962 (forecast)	21,039 (forecast)	
Expenditure	(8,380) (forecast)	(7,793) (forecast)	(3,746) (forecast)	
Income	3,650 (forecast)	11,664 (forecast)	4,000 (forecast)	
Effect of decision from report				
Expenditure		(4,794) (forecast)	(4,732) (forecast)	
Income				
Remaining Budget	21,962 (forecast)	21,039 (forecast)	16,561(forecast)	

7.1.11 Insert at the end of the section: Comments approved by Greta Abeineran, on behalf of the Director of Finance. (Date 15/12/2025)

7.2 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.2.1 The Non-Domestic Rating (Designated Areas) Regulations establish and enable what is known as a 'Local Growth Zone' by providing for the local retention of non-domestic rates collected in designated areas in England, Croydon being one of those areas.

8.2.2 The Regulations designate areas in England ("designated areas") for the purpose of paragraph 39(1) of Schedule 7B to the Local Government Finance Act 1988 ("the 1988 Act") (local retention of non-domestic rates). They provide rules for calculating in respect of a billing authority in England all or part of whose area falls within a designated area— (a) the billing authority's non-domestic rating income in respect of the designated area for a specified year; and (b) the proportion of that non-domestic rating income that is to be disregarded for the purpose of specified calculations under Schedule 7B to the 1988 Act. The calculations are to be made separately for each designated area within which a billing authority's area falls. Regulation 3(1) and Schedule 1 designate the areas. The designation of the areas is made by reference to maps.

- 8.2.3 Through the 2018 Regulations, Regulation 3(2) provides that the designation of the Local Growth Zone in Croydon takes effect on 1st April 2018 and is established for 16 years.
- 8.2.4 The Executive Mayor has the power to exercise executive functions pursuant to s9E of the Local Government Act 2000 and has the power to delegate those functions. This report seeks relevant delegations to exercise executive functions.
- 8.2.5 The legal implications of each individual project will need to be considered as part of those individual decision papers.
- 8.2.6 Comments approved by Kiri Bailey, Head of Commercial, Housing & Litigation Law on behalf of the Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer. (Date 16/12/2024)

7.3 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 8.3.1** The Council has a statutory duty to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. In exercising its functions, the Council must have due regard to the need to:
- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act;
 - (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not; and
 - (c) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.

The protected characteristics under the Act are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including ethnicity and nationality), religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

- 8.3.2** As outlined in its refreshed Equality Strategy 2023–2027, the Council's key priority is to tackle ingrained inequalities and the underlying causes of hardship, including structural racism, environmental injustice, and economic exclusion. The Council has further reaffirmed its anti-racism commitments through the George Floyd Race Matters Pledge, emphasising equity in regeneration and public infrastructure investment.
- 8.3.3** The Growth Zone Equality Analysis (2022) found that the Growth Zone programme, under which this project is funded, will have a broadly positive impact across all protected characteristics. Key benefits identified include improved physical accessibility in the street environment, enhanced access to public transport, a more inclusive cultural and civic offer, and greater connectivity that supports routes into education, employment, and training. The investment is expected to contribute to Croydon becoming a cleaner, safer, and more accessible borough for all residents, particularly marginalised communities.

- 8.3.4** The Growth Zone programme 2026/27 and 2027/28 contributes to the Council's anti-racism commitments by addressing place-based inequalities that have historically limited equitable access to safe and inclusive public infrastructure. The projects included in the programme will support connectivity and inclusion, greater cultural and civic participation, particularly for traditionally underserved communities, thereby advancing the Council's ambition to challenge structural inequality and promote equitable regeneration.
- 8.3.5** While the Equality Analysis has identified predominantly positive impacts, mitigation actions have been developed to manage potential adverse effects throughout the programme's life. These will be monitored and reviewed through the Growth Zone EQIA action plan to ensure regeneration benefits are realised equitably across all communities.

Comments reviewed by Philip Conteh, Senior Equality Officer (Date: 27/11/2025)

9. APPENDICES

- 9.1 N/A

10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- 10.1 **January 2024 Growth Zone Cabinet Report**– [Details of Cabinet Decision](#) and accompanying [Cabinet Report](#)
- 10.2 [Croydon Growth Plan](#)
- 10.3 **February 2025 Town Centre Vision** – [Details of Cabinet Decision](#) and accompanying [Cabinet Report](#)
- 10.4 **May 2025 Growth Zone Mayoral Decision Report** – [Details of Mayoral Decision](#) and accompanying [Decision Report](#)
- 10.5 **May 2025 Levelling Up Fund Mayoral Decision Report** – [Details of Mayoral Decision](#) and accompanying [Decision Report](#)
- 10.6 **September 2025 Growth and Regeneration Update Cabinet Report** – [Details of Cabinet Decision](#) and accompanying [Cabinet Report](#)

11. URGENCY

- 11.1 N/A